

Yeast Treatment Principles

May 2008



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Please visit Dr. Cheikin's website, www.cheikin.com, for additional articles entitled "Yeast", "Stomach Acid" and "GI and Inflammation".

1) There is not one strategy for permanently controlling yeast. Each individual's situation is different and therefore each person's short-term and long-term strategy will be somewhat different. However, the principles outlined here will apply to all patients, though implemented differently.

2) Several yeast species, including Candida, are natural inhabitants of the gut and therefore the strategy is to maintain balance, not to eradicate yeast. Like weeds in a garden, yeast will always be present. Therefore, the goal is to keep the yeast in balance in the colon so it doesn't overgrow or invade.

3) While there are often no direct signs of yeast infection, there are often indirect signs. The direct signs are: recurrent or persistent yeast infection of the vagina, feet, skin, or toenails. The indirect signs are many and may include: upper GI dysfunction (GERD, ulcer), lower GI dysfunction (diarrhea, constipation, IBS, colitis, malabsorption), hormonal imbalance, fatigue, depression, anxiety, allergy, inflammation, autoimmune disease, insomnia, fog, ADD, and in children: autism, behavioral issues, learning disability, seizure and other neurological or inflammatory conditions.

4) Many medications may allow for the overgrowth of Candida, including: antibiotic use (even in the distant past), non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAID's such as Motrin), stomach acid blockers and birth control pills. The yeast syndrome may exist for months to years to decades after using medications. Once established, it may not change unless specific strategies are used. A thorough consideration of factors is necessary in order to achieve a long-standing positive outcome.

5) Successful treatment of yeast syndrome requires consideration and concurrent treatment of other factors that may compromise the immune system including: heavy metals, parasites, petroleum-based toxins and medical conditions such as pre-diabetes, hypoglycemia, PCOS (PolyCystic Ovarian Syndrome), hypothyroidism, autoimmune disease, sleep disorder, past food poisoning, stress, and other conditions. Establishment and maintenance of balance requires a well-functioning immune system. Many conditions, some hidden, may compromise the immune system and interfere with the successful, long-term control of Candida.

6) Yeast overgrowth is a major cause of leaky gut and may require concurrent treatment of the leaky gut. In leaky gut, toxins from the yeast damage the lining of the intestines and allow toxic molecules, bacteria, and other agents to enter the bloodstream. This blood supply goes directly to the liver, which has the job to detoxify these agents. If the liver is overwhelmed, the toxic load of the body increases which can manifest in any or all of the conditions listed in #5 above. Using agents to heal the leaky gut are an important part of an overall strategy.

7) While an anti-yeast diet is usually insufficient to successfully treat yeast, such a diet may be necessary before, during and after treatment to maintain balance. Since yeast thrive on simple carbohydrates, (and to a certain extent poorly digested disaccharides and complex carbohydrates), keeping them out of the diet on a long-term basis is a good idea. These include: white flour, white rice, white sugar and processed juices. However, whole organic fruits may be included in a diet after a leaky gut is improved and acid/enzymes are in place.

8) When yeast is killed, there may be a "die-off" reaction". The products of killed yeast are toxic and may stress the liver and the rest of the body. The die-off reaction may be managed by pre-treatment strategies, use of supportive supplements and gentle ramping up of anti-yeast agents. See principle #9 for other considerations.

9) Liver, kidney and bowel function must be considered before, and during a yeast treatment. Since the liver, kidney and bowels will be the major organs responsible for detoxifying and removing toxins, they must be monitored and supported during a yeast treatment (as well as treating leaky gut as discussed in #6 above).

10) As with any chronic illness, adrenal fatigue may be present and may compromise healing through its effect on the immune system. If adrenal fatigue is present, it should be treated concurrently with gentle adrenal support.

11) Adjunctive modalities such as yoga, acupuncture and NMT may boost the immune system, improve sleep and facilitate the re-balancing of the hormone systems. Such modalities may be essential to achieve a thorough and long-lasting result.

12) Partners should be considered in the treatment strategy for both evaluation and treatment. While, again, yeast is a common agent, if a partner has an uncontrolled case, they can re-infect their treated partner.